

Resource Connections: Natural Resources Conservation Service

Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency in the U.S. Department of Agriculture focused on conservation of private lands. The NRCS works with farmers, ranchers, forest owners and government partners to increase the productivity of working lands while protecting and improving soil, water, air, and wildlife habitats.

NRCS has programs to help landowners carry out management activities such as tree planting, invasive species control, timber stand improvement, and wildlife habitat development. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is one of its most popular programs. EQIP provides financial assistance for completing activities on the ground. Find out more about NRCS and its programs at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/in/home/>.

NRCS and the Division of Forestry have a long-established partnership. The Division of Forestry provides NRCS with technical forestry service. District foresters refer landowners to NRCS programs, develop plans to implement activities, and do field checks once activities are completed. In 2019, the NRCS formally recognized the importance of the relationship and is providing the Division of Forestry a grant to support the hiring of district foresters and to reimburse the division for time spent on NRCS programs.